



OCCUPATIONAL STRESS OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS – A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Teachers with sound mental health are the prime requirement of the country. To understand the mental health status a comparative study was undertaken through descriptive survey method. To collect the data a 49 item "Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI)" was administered on a stratified random sample comprising of 363 male and 234 female teachers selected from 30 schools of West Bengal, India. From the result it was observed that the two groups (female and male) differed (statistically) significantly in occupational stressors scores – the female teachers felt more stress than their male counterparts.

KEY WORD: Stress, Occupational Stress, Teachers Stress, Mild Strength Rating, Barely Noticeable.

1. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

In order to implement effective educational programs, schools need experienced teachers who are equipped to deal with such challenges. In response to increased work demands, and the challenge of educating a diverse student population, many teachers are suffering from mental problems, citing stress as a primary reason for this. Stress factors most often include inadequate salaries, work overload, curriculum concerns, lack of shared decision making and unsatisfactory relationships with stakeholders.

In both qualitative and quantitative research, the stressors, producing stress among the teachers, have consistently been identified; these include – (a) student unrest, their disturbing behaviours, and their lack of motivation and lack of interest; (b) unsupportive administrators; and (c) overly prescriptive inspectors and supervisors who limit the autonomy of the teachers (Finlay-Jones, 1986; Ingersoll, 2001; Schonfeld, 2006; Shirom, Oliver, & Stein, 2009).

Considerable attention has been focused on stress research in educational setting (Hepburn & Brown, 2001; Nagel & Brown, 2003; Williams & Gersch, 2004). Throughout the world, there is currently a great concern regarding the impact of prolonged stress on the health of teachers and consequently, the learning experiences of the students (Antonioni et al., 2000). Costs related to teachers' health issues are also a concern for educational stakeholders seeking to provide quality educational experiences with limited resources (Thomas et al., 2003).

1.1 Significance of the Study:

The education system of a country in general and the school education system in particular are the devices to develop the human capital as economic assets for wealth generation of the country as well as also as social assets for improving the quality of the living of the members of the society.

Based on a review of national and international research, it may be concluded that teachers' occupational stress is a real phenomenon. High level stress is associated with a range of casual factors, such as (a) intrinsic to teaching, (b) individual vulnerability and (c) systematic influences. If stress sustains for a long period of time the problem becomes important. The researchers of this study have made an attempt to explore the occupational stress among the school teachers of West Bengal, India.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to compare life satisfaction of the male and female school teachers of our country.

2. METHODS:

The present study was carried out through descriptive survey method. The details regarding the sample, research instruments, procedure of data collection and statistical technique are reported herewith.

2.1 Sample:

A stratified random sample comprising of 363 male and 234 female teachers selected from 30 Government / Government aided Secondary / Higher Secondary Schools of West Bengal, India, were participated in the study.

2.2 Tool of Research:

The following research tools were used in the present study for data collection. The tools were selected by applying yardsticks of relevance, appropriateness, reliability, validity and suitability. Brief descriptions of the tools are given here-under.

2.3.1 Teacher Stress Inventory (Fimian, 2000):

This inventory has been developed by Fimian (1988) to assess occupational stressors specific to teachers. This inventory includes total 49 items, clustered in 10 factors. Each item is followed by a Likert-type scale that ranges from 1 (no strength; not noticeable) to 5 (major strength; extremely noticeable). To compute the total stress score, sum of the mean item scores in each of the factors is taken, and then the sum is divided by 10 (total number of factors). Actually after normalization the score ranges from 1 to 5, with the midpoint at 3. The score at the higher end of the scale should be considered a potential problem.

It is reported in the manual of the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) that its score is near-normally distributed for the regular teachers (mean = 2.64; median = 2.59). Since these values fall just short of the 3.0 "medium strength" mark, a score of 3.5 would place the strength of stress midway between medium and great strength, with the stressful events being moderately to very noticeable. A score of 1.9 would place a respondent near the "mild strength rating", with his or her stressful events being barely noticeable.

2.4 Procedure for Data Collection:

The heads of the institutions were contracted for his/her permission to allow collecting the data. The relevant data on different constructs were collected by administering the above-mentioned tools on the subjects under study in accordance with the directions provided in the manual of the tool.

2.5 Analysis of the Collected Data:

The results of the study were extracted in three separate ways – (a) descriptive analysis, (b) comparative analysis, and (c) multiple regression analysis. All these three analysis were done with the help of SPSS 20.0 software.

3. RESULT:

The results of the comparative analysis of occupational stress score of male and female teachers are presented herewith.

Table 3.1: Group Statistics of Occupational Stressors Scores of Male and Female Teachers

Teacher Stress	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Occupational Stressors	Female	234	2.328	0.278
	Male	363	2.234	0.355

Table-3.1 exhibits statistics of occupational stressors scores of female and male teachers. The means of female and male teachers were 2.328 and 2.234 respectively; again the standard deviations were 0.278 and 0.355 respectively.

Figure-3.1 shows the bar diagram of means of occupational stressor scores of the female and male teachers.

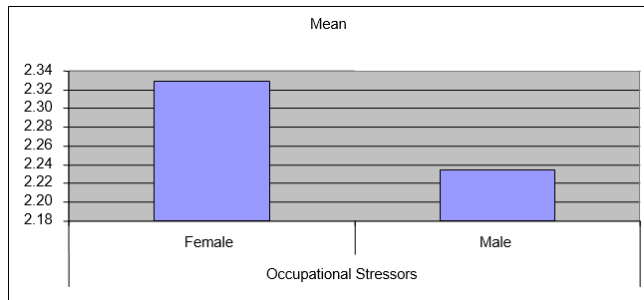


Figure 3.1: Bar Diagram of Means of Occupational Stressors Scores of Female and Male Teachers

From table-3.2 it is transparent that the two groups (female and male) differed (statistically) significantly in occupational stressors scores. The female teachers felt more stress than their male counterparts.

Table 3.2: Results of Independent Samples Test of Gender Wise Comparison of Means of Occupational Stress Scores of Teachers

Teacher Stress		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Occupational Stressors	Equal variances assumed	8.899	0.003	3.418	595	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed			3.600	572.861	0.000

4. DISCUSSION:

From table-3.1 we have the statistics of “occupational stressors” scores of male and female teachers. The means of female and male teachers were 2.328 and 2.234 respectively. Again from the results of table-3.2 it was clear that the two groups (female and male) differed (statistically) significantly in occupational stressors scores – the female teachers felt more stress than their male counterparts.

5. CONCLUSION:

Female teachers felt more occupational stress than their male counterparts.

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